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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3614th meeting of the Security Council, held on 21 December 1995 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Angola", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the Secretary-General's report of 7 December 1995 (S/1995/1012) on the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) pursuant to paragraph 21 of Security Council resolution 1008 (1995) of 7 August 1995.

"The Security Council reiterates its concern at the slow progress in implementation of the provisions of the Lusaka Protocol. The Council stresses the importance of full implementation of the political and all other aspects of the peace process. It underlines that several important tasks that were to have been resolved in the early stages of the peace process remain incomplete, including the exchange of detailed military information, the release of all prisoners, the redeployment of those government troops near UNITA quartering areas, and the final resolution of the issue of mercenaries. In this respect, the Council welcomes the recent announcement by the Government of Angola that it will terminate the contract and repatriate the personnel of the firm involved and will release all remaining prisoners.

"The Security Council notes that the deployment of UNAVEM III troops is nearly complete and that four quartering areas are prepared to receive troops. The Council expresses its disappointment at the slow pace at which the quartering process has proceeded. It calls upon UNITA and the Government of Angola to fulfil their commitments regarding the expeditious quartering and demobilization of former combatants, the quartering of the rapid reaction police, and the return of the Forcas Armadas Angolanas (FAA) to the nearest barracks.

"The Security Council expresses deep concern at the delays in establishing modalities for the integration of the armed forces which is vital for the process of national reconciliation. The Council notes with dismay the series of disruptions in the military talks between the parties.

It urges the parties to continue the military talks without interruption and to conclude an equitable and practicable agreement without further delay. The Council underlines that such an agreement should give particular attention to the expeditious completion of the demobilization and integration of former combatants. It recognizes that the prompt and complete exchange of military information is vital to the success of these talks and urges the parties to provide the information required by the Lusaka Protocol without further delay.

"The Security Council is gravely concerned by continued violations of the cease-fire and military offensives, in particular events in the north-west. The Council calls on both parties to refrain from military activities or troop movements which lead to increased tensions and resumed hostilities and to implement without delay the disengagement plan being prepared by UNAVEM.

"The Security Council deplores the recent threat to the safety of UNAVEM III personnel. The Council reminds the parties, in particular UNITA, that they must take the steps necessary to ensure the safety and security of all UNAVEM III and other international personnel.

"The Security Council expresses regret that UNAVEM radio is not yet operational. The Council calls upon the Government of Angola to facilitate its immediate establishment. It also calls upon both parties to cease the dissemination of hostile propaganda.

"The Security Council is concerned at delays in implementing mine-clearance programmes planned by the United Nations and by Member States, and calls upon the Government of Angola to facilitate issuance of necessary authorizations to relevant personnel. The Council calls upon the Government of Angola and UNITA to intensify their individual and joint demining efforts. It underlines that the opening of roads within Angola, including the clearance of mines and the restoration of bridges, is vital not only to the peace process and the complete deployment of UNAVEM III, but also to the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance and future peace-building efforts. The Council is gravely concerned at the reports of remining in violation of the Lusaka Protocol.

"The Security Council emphasizes that Angolans themselves bear ultimate responsibility for restoring peace and stability in their country. The Council stresses that concrete actions are urgently needed from the parties to put the peace process on an irreversible course. It notes that continued support for UNAVEM III will depend on the extent to which the parties demonstrate their political will to achieve a lasting peace.

"The Security Council notes the important role played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and by the three observer countries in the promotion of the peace process in Angola and calls upon them to further contribute appropriately to the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol within the agreed time framework and to assist UNAVEM III in the successful fulfilment of its tasks.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to update it on the progress of the Angolan peace process and the deployment and activities of UNAVEM III at least on a monthly basis."